THE PACESETTER

Published by the City of Ypsilanti

First Anniversary Edition
Volume II, Issue I, August 1986

Celebrating Community

by Matt Hennessee, City Manager

For the past eight years the fourth weekend in August has been the flagship of festive activities in the Ypsilanti Area. Thousands of people make their way to Ypsilanti, to take part in the Heritage and Black Arts Festivals. This year is also significant because this in the First Anniversary of THE PACESETTER.

The Mayor and City Council and City Administration encourage each of you to capture the ambiance; tour the historic buildings; visit the exhibits and cultural activities; partake in the food and folly; and indeed the genuine hospitality of Ypsilanti. If you allow yourself to be a part of this, you'll understand why we feel the City of Ypsilanti is a "Pacesetter" in it's own right!

This edition is dedicated to celebrating the heritage of our community. If you are a citizen of Ypsilanti, have you ever taken time to think about the history of your neighborhood; the evolution of Ypsilanti's commercial districts; the changing industry; or cultural and demographic transitions? These are all aspects of our community that we should celebrate with pride and which this publication will highlight.

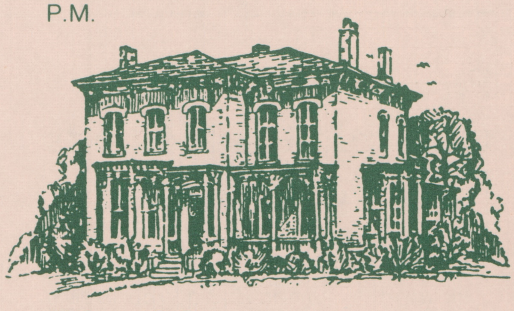
Capitalizing on our prime location, rich heritage, spectacular architecture, thriving industry, impressive educational facilities and an unparalleled spirit of volunteerism, Ypsilanti stands today on the threshold of a bright and optimistic future. In this issue of THE PACESETTER we hope to provide the reader with a fleeting glimpse of yesteryear, and a bountiful vision of the years to come.

100th Anniversary Pageant Naming The City of Ypsilanti in 1923

///Artrain

The Nation's Only Art Museum On Rails

"Signs of the Times: Pop Art & Photo-Realism in America" is this year's theme for the Artrain. The community should be proud to host this popular exhibit for the third time since 1971. Sponsored by Michigan Council for the Arts, the Gallery Tour will be open to the public at the Freight House in Depot Town for six days only. Tuesday, August 19 through Saturday, August 23, Noon to 8:00 P.M., and Sunday, August 24, Noon to 5:00 P.M.



The Mansion at 220 North Huron

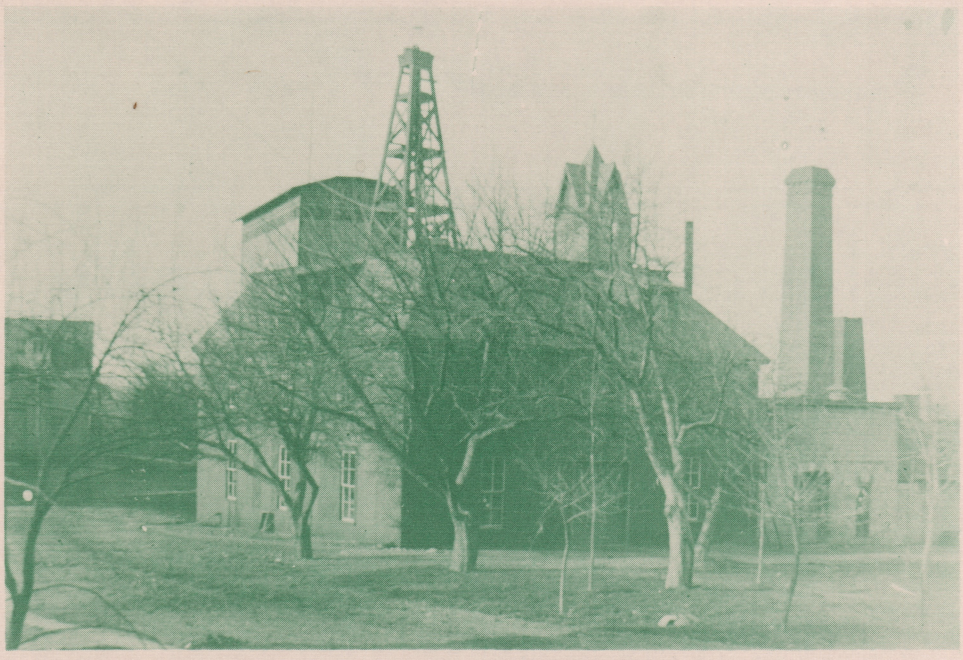
by the Editorial Staff

The Ypsilanti Historical Museum & Archives continue to provide a service to the Ypsilanti Area that is second to none, in providing a menagerie of historical photographs, artifacts, garments, and paraphernalia that represent a variety of vintage eras. The Editorial Staff extends sincere gratitude to the Museum Staff and Ypsilanti Historical Society who have provided this anniversary edition with photographs and historical trivia.

Anyone who has not yet visited the Museum is encouraged to take the opportunity to do so. While this edition may bring a taste of the museum to our readers, it can't compare with the flavor of memorabilia collected, preserved, and displayed at the museum.

Regular Hours: Fri.-Sun. 2:00 - 4:00 P.M.
Festival Hours: Friday: 2:00 - 6:00 P.M.
Sat.: 10:00 - 6:00 P.M.
Sun.: 12:00 - 4:00 P.M.

T.C. Owen Mineral Wells, West Forest Avenue



Tubal Cain Owen was the proprietor of the Atlantis Mineral Well and one of the most progressive and philanthropic of modern scientific manufacturers of curative remedies during the 1860's.

Once Owen acquired his property on West Forest Avenue, he began digging a well as a source of fresh water. Instead, the water was determined to be totally unfit for human consumption as drinking water, being heavily concentrated with salts and other minerals. After a series of tests, Owen discovered that the water could be used for curative purposes.

Fire Resistant Construction Methods Improve With Time

by James Roberts

How many times have you heard someone say "They don't build them today like they used to"? Well, there are good reasons for this: Newer methods of construction have proven time and time again, that they withstand the ravages of fire and the elements much better than in earlier days.

Drywall, for example, is now known to be a very effective firestopping material and is not combustible. Plaster, on the other hand, was installed over a series of thin strips of wood, called lath. Once subjected to fire, lath would burn, thus contributing to the severity of the fire.

One construction method used in earlier years is known as "Balloon". If a fire should penetrate a wall in balloon construction, there was nothing to prevent the fire from spreading. Today's construction methods don't allow this to happen as easily because firestops are now built to separate the floor and attic areas.

"Timber" construction, another method of construction, was a very sturdy form of construction, but again the materials used were combustible. Today, steel has replaced the use of wood as another successful stride forward in the building trade.

They may not build them like they used to; but you can bet that buildings today are much more fire resistant.

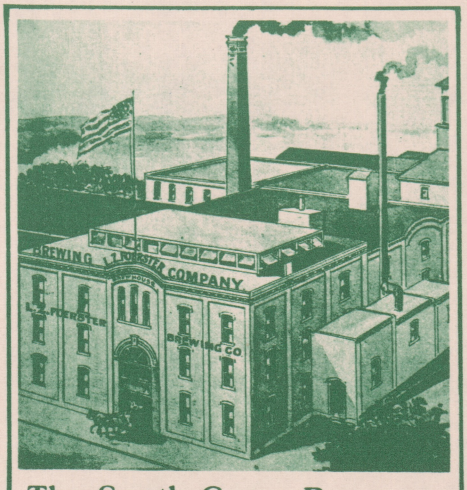
1893 Cyclone Disaster Destroyed Cleary College

On April 12, 1893, devastating damage resulted from a cylone that left a trail of wreckage including severe damage to the newly completed Cleary College, which was then located on the corner of Hamilton and Michigan Avenue. The entire back portion was left a rubbish heap, the top of the tower was overturned, and the east was blown out. The same site stands today as the proposed location for EMU's College of Business.

Ypsilanti Union Suits Provocatively Promoted

The factory produced one-piece undergarments known as "union suits" which were knitted and tightly fitted. The plant, located on North Huron, was operated by the Hay and Todd Company and was known nationwide for its fine products. The Underwear Plant is still known today for the 15 foot "lady" painted on the back of the factory. Wearing only a tight fitting union suit, she was a sensation to all passers by! The provocative saying below accompanied the model:

"A sculptor of Nymphs and bacchantes
Omitted the coats and the panties
A kind hearted madam who knew that she had', em
Supplied them with warm Ypsilanti's."



The South Grove Brewery, Established in 1869

Community Profile:

Charles "Gene" Beatty

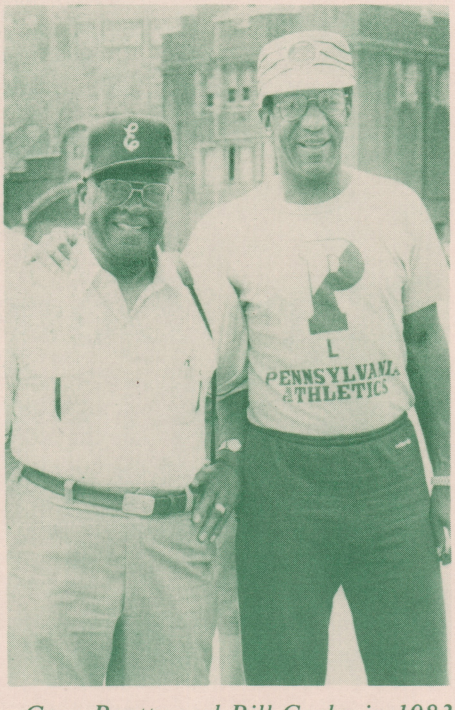
by Dina Sanders

Charles Beatty has been instrumental in creating educational programs for younger children, as well as having broken many world records in track. Beatty better known as "Chief," is well known in all circles.

Beatty came to Ypsilanti in 1935 to attend Michigan Normal College, now Eastern Michigan University, where he set records in the 400 meter low hurdles, and also established world records at the PENN Relays. During the same year he married Evelyn Charlotte Douglas. They now have three children and seven grandchildren.

Beatty states that he originally wanted to be a doctor, but with an athletic background, he switched to health and physical education. After receiving his degree, he began teaching and later served as Principal of Perry School, Chapelle School and Central Elem #2. Beatty's retired in 1974, and later was inducted into the Michigan Education Hall of Fame.

He presently serves on the Ypsilanti Board of Education and on many of Ypsilanti's community and service agencies. His spirit of volunteerism is boundless. Gene Beatty is an inspiration to many people; humble and a great individual.



Gene Beatty and Bill Cosby in 1983

Elections

by Robert A. Slone

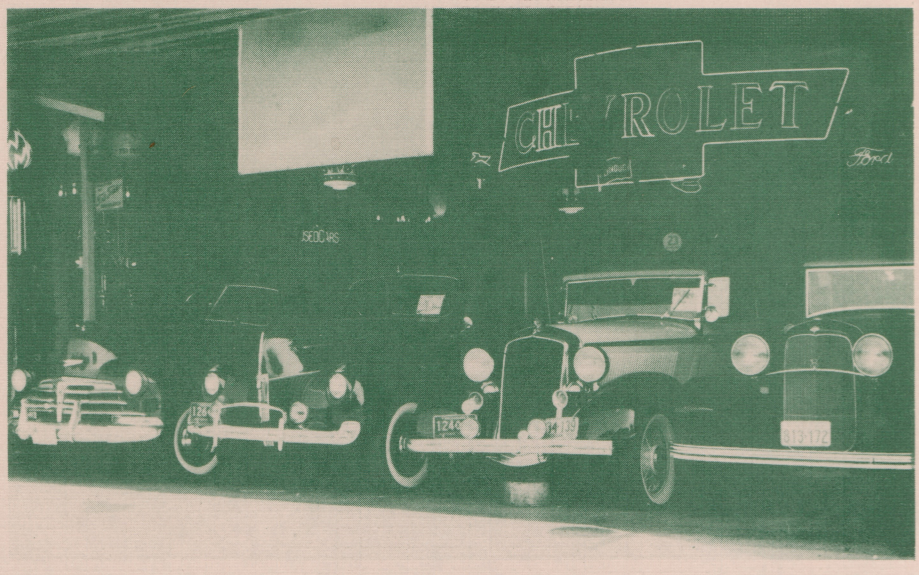
Voting has been an important right that our parents fought for over the years in protecting our democratic society.

Ypsilanti began as a trading post along the Huron River in 1809. During the early years, most business and elections of local officers were conducted at the annual town meetings, by voice, or show of hand votes. As our city developed, so did our voting systems by using paper ballots and sealed ballot boxes. While many communities now use punch card balloting, the City of Ypsilanti still uses the automatic voting machine for greater efficiency.

Fall registered electors should exercise their constatutional right to vote that our ancestors fought for by voting in the State General Election, Tuesday, November 4, 1986. You must be registered to vote by October 6th, to be eligible to vote in the November Electon.

Tom Conway's Auto Museum - Ypsilanti's Old Fire Station

The City of Ypsilanti pays tribute to Mr. Conway for his fine renovation of the old Ypsilanti Fire Station and establishing an outstanding collection of vintage vehicles!



The photograph above illustrates a small sample of the automobiles on display at Conway's Auto Museum.

Ypsilanti City Council

	(Ward)	
Mayor Peter J. Murdock		485-7799
Mayor Pro-Tem Eula M. Tate	-1-	485-3865
Albert A. Robinson	-1-	482-5861
Clyde K. King	-2-	483-3104
Michael W. Homel	-2-	483-2499
Kevin McCormick	-3-	484-0617
Eric B. Smith	-3-	483-8633
John Van Bolt	-4-	483-6972
Beverly A. Fish	-4-	484-1897
Lynda Hummel	-5-	483-5861
Jerold W. Bubenhofer	-5-	485-4723

Changing Times: The Willow Run Bomber Plant

by Doug Fouty

World War Two brought a shift in Ypsilanti's population that carries forth today. Locals refer to it as the era of the Bomber Plant; the people who worked at the plant, no matter what job or status, were "Bomber People".

Several Ypsilantians can cite the bombers produced, employees, and population boom, but the memories of the citizenry reflect the more personal impact of the war. When those who lived here during the 40's discuss the Bomber Plant, memories of music, USO events, walking with your gal or guy along the river, Gwen Frostic, and soldiers are reborn.

LeVerne Howard and Doris Milliman of the Ypsilanti Historical Museum remember music coming from the windows and doorways. In those days every window and door represented another family. Shifts were staggered at the plant so people were coming and going all day and night.

While many people may not have personally experienced the impact of the Willow Run Bomber Plant, one must recognize the significance of this period, which transformed the Ypsilanti area from a sleepy hamlet to a vibrant industrial, commercial, and educational center.